

VZCZCXRO4860
OO RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #1043/01 1931218
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 111218Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1308
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFIS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001043

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, AF/C,
NSC FOR BPITTMAN AND CHUDSON, ADDIS ABABA PLEASE PASS TO
USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/10/2013

TAGS: ASEC KPKO PGOV PREL AU UN SU

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIALLY WARNS OF "DISASTROUS, SERIOUS
IMPACT" IF BASHIR INDICTED BY ICC

REF: A. KHARTOUM 1025

1B. KHARTOUM 996
1C. KHARTOUM 993
1D. KHARTOUM 992
1E. KHARTOUM 982

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: The Sudanese Foreign Ministry called in Charge to warn of "serious and disastrous consequences" if President Al-Bashir is indicted by the International Criminal Court. The Under-Secretary reiterated past requests (reftels) that the US use its influence to rein in ICC prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo. The MFA also warned of a possible new massive attack by combined Darfur rebel groups either in Darfur or the Nile Valley. At the same time, officials reiterated their good will towards the United States and their intention to beef up protection of Embassy facilities and personnel over the next few days, including granting the Embassy long-sought after regular vehicle plates in place of CD plates. End summary.

ICC TENSION PLUS POTENTIAL REBEL ATTACK

12. (C) MFA summoned Charge Fernandez to an unusual weekend meeting on July 11 to discuss the expected ICC indictments of senior Sudanese officials. International news reports broke on July 10 that President Al-Bashir could be named by ICC prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo perhaps as soon as Monday, July 14. CDA was received by MFA Under-Secretary Mutriff Siddiq and head of protocol Ali Yusuf.

13. (C) Siddiq said that he had called in Charge to discuss the ICC indictments based on the recent news stories. He added that "we are heading towards something really big, that will have an impact on all of Sudan and the region, not just Darfur." Indicting any more senior Sudanese officials, whether limited to the President or not, is "contrary to the objective of peace and to your own goals in Sudan." He urged that the USG "talk sense to Ocampo before it is too late." Siddiq continued that "we don't know what will happen now but any opportunist or enemy of the regime who wants to attack Sudan will take this decision as an invitation to do their worst." This will have consequences in Darfur but could also affect the South, the East and regional stability, he continued "anything is possible".

14. (C) Siddiq warned that the GOS is picking up increased information about preparations for a major Darfur rebel assault in that regQ1S:cnd possibly Minni Minnawi's forces are uniting and the target could be one of Darfur's capitals or even a return assault on

targets in the Nile Valley like the Merowe Dam or Omdurman/Khartoum in the coming days and weeks even though the rainy season should eventually make such operations more difficult.

ADDITIONAL SECURITY PROMISED

15. (C) Mutriff said that he had spoken earlier to JSR Adada and DSRSG for Humanitarian Affairs Amira Haqq (SRSG Qazi is absent) to assure them that "the UN and UNAMID are our guests, we will deal with them in a very civilized way, and they have nothing to fear from the Sudanese Government as long as they stick to their mandate." He said that the Sudanese state's top priority will be to defend itself, protect the capital and strategic targets, deter any rebel assault and protect diplomatic missions. Siddiq added that the GOS will be taking additional steps to beef up protection for US Embassy staff and facilities within the next few days. He had asked NISS (National Intelligence and Security Service) to coordinate with Embassy security and RAO in anything we needed. He said that the long sought after non-diplomatic vehicle plates for embassy cars would be granted "no later than early Sunday morning, July 13" (Note: Embassy has been seeking the fulfillment of this Sudanese promise for several months now but has been consistently stymied by the Sudanese authorities since early June. End note).

KHARTOUM 00001043 002 OF 002

16. (C) CDA thanked Siddiq for Sudanese efforts to protect diplomatic missions, especially the US Embassy. He cautioned Mutriff about any ill-considered media incitement by the regime that could unintentionally stoke anti-Western and anti-American feeling. He added that Mutriff was well aware that the US is not a member of the ICC, does not recognize its authority over Americans and abstained on UNSC 1593 which asked for Sudan to cooperate with the court. Siddiq answered that he was well aware of all the efforts that went into the US abstaining and not vetoing 1593. He would be calling in the UK, French, German and Italian Ambassadors later in the day to give them a similar message "but asking them to do more because - the British and French especially - are pushing this decision." The MFA would also be meeting with African countries and with Arab League states requesting their support to fight this "reckless and unfair decision."

17. (C) Comment: Unlike several previous meetings with senior Sudanese officials over the past week to discuss the consequences of an ICC decision, this was a practical and much more alarming meeting. The fact that the Sudanese officials were quite friendly, helpful but also concerned about unknown consequences is telling and the combination of GOS fear of a new rebel attack coupled with rising tension resulting from an ICC indictment is a new dimension for chronically unstable Sudan. Our sense is that Siddiq's dire depiction of the possibility of turmoil is only slightly exaggerated. CDA is convening an EAC meeting today, July 11 - the third such meeting in six days - to discuss what further steps the Embassy should take. End comment.

FERNANDEZ